ART. II.—Ecclesiastical Collections for Aberdeenshire. (a)

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[Read December 22d 1823.]

RATHVEN.

Rathven is a parish in Banffshire, situated in the district called the Enzie, being 10 miles in length, and from 3 to 5 in breadth. The name would appear to have been in former times pronounced Rochtiven, (b) Rothfan, or Raffan, and is now provincially softened into Riven. It is derived from the Gaelic: and is composed of two words, one signifying braken or fern, and the other, rock, eminence, or hillock. The propriety of this etymology is supported by Rannachie, i.e. Brakenfield, the name of a neighbouring farm, and Brakenhaugh, a place near the church, &c. (c).

A church must have existed here at a very early period. The first time I can find it noticed is in 1222, when, "John Bisset " gives to God and the Church of St Peter at Rothven, for the " sustaining of seven leprous persons, the church of Kiltalargyn, " with the pertinents," which is confirmed by his brother William, to pray for the souls of King William and Alexander, and the souls of his ancestors and successors. (d)

(a) This paper is the substance of a manuscript volume, presented by the Author to the Society, and deposited in their library. The parts omitted comprise, with some few exceptions, monumental inscriptions of a recent date, that have merely a local interest.

(b) Orens's description of the Chanonry of Old Aberdeen, p. 78.


(d) The Bede-house is still standing, but in bad repair; and I believe none of the men live in it. The nomination is in the gift of Lord Findlater as proprietor of Rannachie, from which land they get half an acre for life, and 1 boll meal; from that of Finnochty, 8s. 1½d., and from the proprietor of Freuchnie, 1s. 4½d.—Stat. Account. Keith's Caledonia, vol. I.
In 1364, permission from Edward king of England was given to John De Caron, rector of the church of Rothen, to pass into England, for the purpose of studying, with two horsemen. (e)

In 1441, Ingraham Lindsay, bishop of Aberdeen, made the parson one of the prebends of his cathedral; and thence it became one of the common kirks of the See. (f)

In 1563 an account was taken of its revenues, which were considerable. (g)

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(e) Rotuli Scotiae, L. 886.
(f) Orem, ut supra.
(g) The following statement, in reference to this period, is found in "an original book of assumptions, which belonged to Mr James Cumming, secretary to the Society of Scots Antiquaries," and was communicated to the Rev. Geo. Donaldson, minister of the parish, by Bishop Geddes:

"The Rental of the parsonage of Rathven, with the annexis thereto, within the dioceis of Aberdein and Murray respective, shirefdoms of Banff and Murray respective.

In the first: The teind silver of the parochen of Rathven, seven score and six pounds.

The malles of the baronie of Rathven, thirty-one merks.

The fermes of the Loynhead, akkers and mill-maltures, extendis to five score bolls of beer.

Item, the kirke of Dundurcus, sett for forty pounds.

Item the kirke of Kintallertie, twenty-four pounds.

Item, the landis of Mulben, lying in the parochen of Dundurcus, sixteen merks.

Thereof deductis ordinar charges to six bedmen, forty-two merks.

Item, to their habits, seven pounds four shillings.

Item, to the staller in Aberdeen.

Item, given forth of Dundurcus to the Abbey of Kinloss, six pounds.

Sic subscribitur,

G. HAY, my hand."


The "hail vicarage" in 1575, before which time we are told it was not charged nor rentalled, was valued at L.16; and in 1576, the "hail vicarage and parsonage" was charged at L.100.

About 1620, "The kirklands of Ranes, Canoege, Wester Freuchie, Nether Freuchie, Nether Rothen, with the tower, &c. in the barony of Rothen, shirefdom of Banff, and dioce of Aberdein, sett to Mr Ja. Hay, for L.35 7s. 6d. Nota, per R. 4 61. Nether Freuchie, per se, sett to Gordon of Bucke, extending yeartlie to L.5 8s. 4d. 2 bolls haren, or 6s. 8d. per boll; 1 boll custom oats, with the fodder, or
A new church was erected about twenty years ago, and part of the material taken from the old kirk. This building was long and narrow, and stood on the south side of a small rivulet. The north wall and west is all that now remains. (See the subjoined wood-cut.) The projection on which the belfry is raised, is a later erection than the gable. (h)

The chief antiquity is an effigy of the celebrated Thomas of Rivan, better known when mentioned with his brother John; the song and popular stories of Jock and Tam being still familiar in that part of the country. (i) He was son of Sir Adam Gordon of

Jock and Tam went to the sea,
My good-will be in their company.
They sailed east, they sailed west,
Till they came to the coast of Spain.

Then they cam' trippin' on the steer,
Says, "sell ye ale, or sell ye beer,
Or lodge ye any o' our Scotsmen here?"

"We neither sell ale, nor yet do we beer,
Nor do we lodge o' your Scotsmen here.
Gentlemen ye appear to be,
The' ye be far fue your ain country."

"In Scotland we were bred an' born;
Our land liez ley, it grows no corn;
But woman, woman, ye do wrong.
For our names are Jock an' Thom."

"We may sell ale, we may sell beer,
An' we may sell this hunder year,
This hunder year, if we live so lang,
But we'll ne'er see the like o' Jock and Tam."

(i) The following is the song as repeated to me by an old man. I am not aware of its existence in print.

A person named Gordon, having had the misfortune to subject himself to the cognizance of session, was enjoined to be at the expense of building this part as a propitiation for his offence. On the lintel of the belfry is an inscription now illegible.

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"St. 4d.; 12 capons, or 8s. the peice; 12 hens, or 4s. the peice, and 4s. of augmentation.
Inde L.4. 13s. 6d. The lands of Fresken sett to Ogilvie of Glasso.
Such for 4 h. 1 boll oats, 12 capons, 4 reik hens, 1 boll murther. The lands of Fin-
dachtie, extending in money yearlie to L.2. 6s. 8d. 5 silver pennies, at 14s. per pen-
ny, 1 boll custome oats, 12 capons, 1 reik hens, 2 bolls murther sett to Thomas Ord.
The lands of Caurnbuchan, sett to him for L. 6s. 8d. 1 boll murther, 2 firlots custome
oatts, and 6 capons. The lands of Scotstounsett to him for 7s. 1d. 2 firlots murther,
2 pecks oatts, 2 capons, and 10s. 4d. of augmentation. The croft pertaining to the
vicarage sett to Duff for L. 1. 3s. 8d."—Harleian Coll. MS. 4632. 50.
ECCLESIASTICAL ANTIQUITIES OF KINKELL.

Strathbogey, (k) by a daughter of Cruickshank of Aswanly, and was most famous in his day for "doughty deeds." The tradition is that he was killed by a monk with whom he had a quarrel. The figure (See Plate 2, fig. 3) lies under an arch, and represents him "harisit in his gear," in a praying attitude.

KINKELL.

The situation of this church is on a verdant haugh on the north bank of the river Don, and in the southern part of the parish of Keithhall, into which it is now merged. The ruins are seen in passing between Kintore and Inverury, from which towns they are nearly equidistant. The etymology assigned to the name is Gaelic; the word being a compound of caen, head, or principal, and cill, a church. The designation was appropriate, as the benefice formerly consisted of seven kirks, viz. Kintore, Kinnellar, Kemnay, Dyce, Skene, and Drumblate, besides the mother church. (l) It is said to have once belonged to the Templars.

In the latter end of the 13th century, Petrus de Campania was parson; and, in 1424, the incumbent was made one of the prebends of old Aberdeen cathedral.

In 1559, Henry Lindsay was parson; and, when the advancement of the Reformation alarmed Bishop Gordon, he parcelled out the cathedral plate amongst the prebends for its security, when 90 ounces of silver were entrusted to him.

In the account book of Robert Lord Boyd, receiver general in 1576, the third of the parsonage was stated at L.177. 12s. 2d. and the "haill vicarage at L.6." (m)

Ancestor of the family of Huntly, and slain at Homeldon Hill.

About 1620, the kirk-land was set in feu to George Earl of Huntly for L4. 13s. 4d.

In 1632, Kemnay was taken from Kinkell, and made a distinct parish by permission of the Archbishop of St Andrews. And about 1662, the patronage and parsonage were annexed to St Andrews by Archbishop Sharp. (n)

In 1771, the church was unroofed, and the materials used for the new church at Montkegie, which then became the parish kirk. Since that time it has gone rapidly to ruin, more perhaps from the ravages of man than the effects of the elements; the polished quoins, and even sepulchral tablets, offering a temptation so strong as to overcome the dread of sacrilege.

In its architecture this building was superior to the neighbouring edifices of the same kind, as the parson was of higher dignity among the ecclesiastics. It was long and narrow, its extreme length being nearly 80 feet and breadth about 24. The east end contained a large and elegant window, the tracery of which, it is probable, the Covenanters, in their laudable and effectual labours, took an early opportunity of simplifying. Since that time it has been entirely built up; for, besides the richness of its architecture, an eastern window might remind the people of the altar, and the ornaments of popery. In other respects the edifice was plain. In the north wall, about the centre, is a square niche, where perhaps the rood has been deposited, (o) The east window is 8 feet wide, and is ornamented outside with a weather moulding, resting on human heads for corbels.

Many of the principal persons who fell at the "brim battle o'

(k) Ancestor of the family of Huntly, and slain at Homeldon Hill.
(l) Orem's Descrip. of the Chan. 76. (m) Harleian M.S. 4123.
(n) Orem. of sup. Carlisle's Top. Diet. &c. But I am inclined to think the place thus annexed was that so called near St Andrews.
(o) A tradition is still retained of images having been kept, and incense burnt, at the altar end; and much wealth is believed to lie with the foundation stone in the south-east corner.

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the Harlaw," "stricken" 24th June 1411, were brought to this place for sepulture—the chief of whom was Sir Robert Serimgeour, "high constable of great Dundee." (p) He was interred before the high altar, and opposite one of the entrances. The slab which covers his grave is of free-stone; but the lower end appears to have been broken. It is, however, well protected by a mass of rubbish, which will prevent its being effaced for some time. The execution is barbarous. The inscription is:—"Hic jacet nobilis armiger Robertus de Seri ....... anno dni. m.cccc. ...." (See Plate 3. fig. 3)

On the north interior wall near the east end are two mural monuments which are well executed. (See Plate 3. fig. 1 and 2.) The centre compartment of one of these forms an opening through the wall; and there are the remains of iron work, from which it would seem that a tablet has at one time filled the aperture. Could it have been moveable for the purpose of depositing offerings? The frequent occurrence of the initials A. G. leads me to think it must have belonged to Alexander Galloway, who was parson in the beginning of the sixteenth century, and was rector of this church for many years. He took an active part in the affairs of the diocese, then agitated by the approaching Reformation; and appears also to have been addicted to philosophical pursuits, "gevand his mynd with maist ernist bysynes to serehe the veritie," according to his contemporary Boethius, (q) whom he accompanied on a scientific tour to the isles, and who details his wonderful discovery of a "claik goose." (r)

p Boethius calls him "Magna animo ser, ac insigni virtute."
q Boethius's Cosmography, ch. xiv. ap.—Sibbald's Hist. Fife and Kinross, p. 197.
r Thomas Lumsden was rector in the beginning of the seventeenth century; and a slab-stone remains to his memory in the south aisle of the cathedral full of rude sculpture in relief—the principal figure being a skeleton, with the motto "In horte viti" around its head.
KEITH-HALL.

This parish is of recent origin, having been constituted when those of Kinkell and Montkegie were dissolved in 1754. It derives its name from the seat of Earl Kintore.

In the time of King William there was a chapel here; and when the Abbey of Lindores was founded, the church of Inverurie, "cum capella de Munkegin et omnibus aliis pertinentis suis," were conferred on it. (s)

OYNE.

Oyne is 24 miles north-west from Aberdeen; and the name is probably Gaelic. (t)

A church must have existed here at a very early period; for, in 1163, King Malcolm IV. granted a charter to the cathedral of Aberdeen, when the kirk was bestowed on it, and the parson appointed one of the bishop's chapter. (u) He was Prothonotarius Capituli; and from having often to go to Rome to communicate with the Pope on the affairs of the diocese, he was called Rome Baker. As a prebend he had a manse with yard and glebe in the Chanonry.

In 1542, James Wavern was parson, and was one of the visitors of King's College in that year. (v) John Leslie, afterwards Bishop of Ross, was also the incumbent of Oyne.
In 1576, the “hall parsonage and vicarage” was valued at £173. (a)

About 1620, the lands of the kirktown, “extending yearly to £23, with 20s. of augmentation,” were set in feu to Leith of Harthill. (y)

In the burial ground, from which the new church is removed, slight vestigia of the old building remain. It had an aisle on the south side, which, having belonged to the lairds of Harthill, was called Harthills; and I have been told that there were some inscriptions on it. On the same side, near the west end, was an arched door, which has still retained the appellation of “marriage door.” Opposite to it was another narrower. There was a window in each gable, and a belfrey at the west end. Formerly two bells hung in it, and another in a tower, or other erection, in the west part of the church-yard, where its ruins are still visible. (z)

In 1675, the church-yard walls appear to have been very much dilapidated; (a) and, in 1701, the roof was renewed with fir from the woods of Glentanar. (b) Also, in the same year, on the 20th of May “the minister, heritors, and tenants, convened after sermon” for taking some effectual course for repairing the churchyard dykes; & it being agreed by all, every heritor, or one for him, should draw lots which of them should begin the work.

The following are Miscellaneous Extracts from the Session-book of Oyne:—

April 8th 1666.—Giwins for sawing elies of harden to be an sackcloath, £1 3s. 4d.
29.—Giwins for making the sd. sackcloath, £1 0s. 0d.
March 16. 1672.—The minister and elders, considering how God’s worship was molested by dogs in the church, desired the collector to cause mak one dog-clip.
23.—John Meldrum, collector, declared he had cause mak ane dog-clip; and it was said that one of the elders, viz. Patrick Marstain, should wait on the next Lord’s day, betwixt the second and third bell, to cause those who brought dogs to the church (either themselves or their servants) to tak the clip & draw them to the church stily; & it was ordained that those who disobeyed to do so should be caused satisfie as occasioners of sabbath breaking.

Dec. 12th 1675.—For trees to plant: the kirk-yard (one day’s collection); £1 7s. 10d.
June 18th. 1682.—The said day, the minister told the people that he was charged with some of his loving parishers; therefore he desired the people to go and beg their bread of life till he returned.

Sep. 21st 1684.—James Petrie, depute for yokeing his horse, and taking in corn upon Sunday’s night, gave his honest word he did not yoke a horse till after the cock crew!

April 12th 1685.—On William Couper, sumonned for his perturbing a woman in time of divine worship, by hurling her of the forest of ane dask, to let his wife have place.

Robert Bainzie was accused of charming or witchcraft. At fitting, he killed his dog within doors, & buried a cat beneath his hearth; also he take his crook out at the lumb, & extinguished the fire with p—s.

This man was an elder, and although he stood out long, was at last forced to acknowledge his fault, & was rebuked.

FOVERAN.

FOVERAN, a parish in the district, called Formartin, is eleven bodies of those who were carried to their narrow dwelling, until about the year 1790, a certain woman came down the country and drowned herself in the Gadie. On this occasion, the heirs were employed to bear her corpse, and for the unchristian office were burned.

The settlement of the Reverend William Mair, he required “a list of the church utensils,” when there was found “Two tin Bassons, three peuter cups, ane Dornick table cloth, and ane old Mortcloath of Bishop Satine.” (c)
miles north of Aberdeen. The name is derived from the Gaelic, and is said to signify "abounding in springs." (d) More probably some of these may, in remote ages, have been famous for medicinal qualities, the word *fohaìr*, in that language, signifying "a salve or ointment;" and the vicinity of a place so much resorted to was an eligible site for a place of worship. (e)

William Strathbog, who got a charter of the lands of "Foverne" from Robert Bruce, gave an annuity of £5 out of the rents of some tenements in Aberdeen to the altar of St James. (f)

At kirk there was an alms house, with an inscription on a marble stone. "D. Alex. Forbes, Foveran qui terre hujus bona "non in avaritiae praedam sed instrumenta bonitati acquisivit, "aedam hane pauperibus aleudis extruxit et dolavit." And another over the gate, "Extra fortunam ex quicquid donatur "Egenis, Quæ dantur sola sempem habentur opes."

The old church had an aisle on the south side, which is still inclosed with a low wall, and contains an old slab stone, in memory of Sir Alexander and Samuel Forbes, formerly lairds of Foveran. (See Plate 3. fig. 4.) The figures are cut; and it is curious that the inscription has not been finished. It is now broken. (g) If it really belongs to the Forbeses, I am puzzled with the arms represented.

On each side of the south gate of the kirk-yard is a stone rudely sculptured in relief, and intended as ornamental terminations to the sides or jambs. I have been told they were brought from Chapelton, a place at some distance, where there would seem to have been a place of worship.

(e) See Forbes's Description, M.S. in Mus. Brit. (Ayscough, 4215,) who says a well existed in his time, covered with an arch or vault, 35.
(f) Robertson's Index of Charters.
(g) The figures evidently hold scrolls in their hand, although the motto has not been filled in.

**MARYCULTER.**

Maryculter, provincially Couter, is seven miles from Aberdeen, on the south bank of the river Dee, near which the church originally stood. Spottiswood, and the Reverend John Glennie, who wrote the statistical account, give us the etymology of the name, in *Maria cultura*; but it would rather appear to be the original Gaelic *cultir*, i.e. back-land, with the adjunct of *Mary*, to whom, most probably, the church has been dedicated.

There is a tradition that the adjoining parish was formerly included in this; but the inconvenience of an intervening river induced the Pope, on petition, to constitute the north part a distinct parochial charge, the word *Peter* being prefixed to the primitive cultir, which is still retained in the name of a neighbouring estate.

Maryculter was formerly a residence of the templars, who were introduced into Scotland, temp. David I. After their suppression, much of their property was transferred to the knights of St John, among which was Maryculter. The last preceptor resigning all their possessions to Queen Mary, she feued them to him again for 10,000 crowns and 500 merks per annum. He however disposed them to James Tennent of Lynhouse, and Mr Robert Williamson, writer in Edinburgh, but reserved to himself the lands of Maryculter, and right to the church. Some time after they conveyed their whole right to Lord Binny.
A manuscript, which once belonged to Patrick Murray of Deuchar, is said to have contained an account of all the lands and feu-duty which belonged to the Templars. (k)

There is now a new church some distance southward from the old one, which stood on a pleasant haugh. The latter is razed to the ground, but was superior to many country kirk, having the windows and doors of neat pointed arches, &c. The walls have been about 3 feet thick, and the dimensions 2/7 paces by 10. A part of the east end was divided from the main body, and was called an aisle, being the burial place of the family of Pittodres, to whom the land once belonged. Here, under an arch, lay the effigies of an ancient laird and his lady; (See Plate 2, fig. 1 and 2) but whether the story I have heard, of their having been brought from Aberdeen when the West Kirk was rebuilt, be true, I have never ascertained, nor can I prove the truth of a tradition that the persons they represent were lost on the French coast. These venerable monuments now lie among the rubbish; but the injuries from about 40 years exposure to the weather have not yet effaced the beauty of the workmanship. The dress of the female is not unbecoming.

The bell was famous for its fine tone. (i) The only gallery was in the west end, the front of which was ornamented with various carvings, and on it hung the jugs. When the old kirk was demolished, those who possessed seats were allowed to remove them, and a few availed themselves of the liberty. One of these I have seen at the farm of Tilboury.

A Spottiswood.

(i) Only two were said to be equal to it in that part of the country, one of which was the bell of Trinity Chapel, Aberdeen. They were all three made together, and brought from Holland at the same time. This one was unfortunately cracked nearly half a century ago, by some fishermen, who had been with a funeral, and pulled it down by furious ringing.